



**Initiative motion at the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual National Convention of IG Metall held in Frankfurt am Main from 19 to 24 October 2015**

## **“Redefining Europe” – more relevant than ever**

The Euro crisis has by no means been banished by virtue of the Greek government signing a third »memorandum« imposed upon it. On the contrary: this approach to “combatting the crisis” is exacerbating problems in the countries hit hardest by the crisis, impeding reforms that are truly needed there. The iron resolve of the Troika, the Euro group and the Federal German government to cut social support, destroy collective agreement systems, privatise the public infrastructure and saddle the population with the costs of it all is cementing a dismal state of rampant unemployment, bleak prospects for the future and ever greater inequality in the common currency area. We have also been witnessing a virulent assault on trade union rights and the autonomy of collective bargaining in Finland and Great Britain as well over the last few weeks.

This experience shows that the EU and the European Monetary Union are being misused as a lever to push through anti-social policies and dismantle democracy. This is in turn encouraging national chauvinism, xenophobia and other anti-democratic sentiment in the countries of Europe. Europe’s failure to cope with the refugee crisis at present is further stoking this development.

Against the background of the most recent developments, we would like to say this: IG Metall is acting to counter these threats and will do its utmost to position itself as a powerful proponent of a democratic Europe based on solidarity:

- IG Metall is working to promote solidarity campaigns at European trade unions to support colleagues and the unemployed in Greece and other countries hard hit by the crisis and is fighting nationalist rabble-rousing with a public-relations offensive.
- IG Metall is publicly objecting to the austerity course being pursued by the Euro group and the German government and all efforts to turn Greece and other “programme countries” into low-wage countries. Europe does not need any low-wage competition between EU countries, and instead needs to strengthen fundamental social and democratic rights in all of them.
- To improve the situation in countries gripped by crisis, a European growth and investment programme going far above and beyond the so-called »Juncker Plan« is needed, as the trade unions have proposed in the guise of the »Marshall Plan for Europe« and the »European Investment Plan«. IG Metall is working at the European and bilateral level to deepen this plan and heighten awareness of it at EU institutions. Access to investment resources must be considerably eased for Greece and other crisis countries, while the scope of investment in the future must be expanded to a level that limits economic damage caused by reductions in expenditures to the greatest extent possible. Trade unions, environmental associations and other civil society forces in Europe need to contribute their own proposals for strategic fields of investment to the debate and act to ensure transparency so that ambition targets and objectives can truly be attained.

- IG Metall is working in a broad alliance for a more social and more just Europe. All interested societal groups and individuals in Germany and Europe are invited to take part in and contribute their ideas to this alliance. A discussion of the best possible political thrust to attain our goals for the benefit of European employees and their trade unions has to start up now.

Adopted unanimously at the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual National Convention of IG Metall in Frankfurt am Main on 22 October 2015.